



1939

Annual Report



OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

OF THE

Urban Sanitary Authority

OF

EAST DEREHAM,

NORFOLK.

EAST DEREHAM:

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East Dereham Urban District Council

INTERIM ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH for 1939.

Sec. A. STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area, (in Acres)	...	...	5,313
Population, (Census 1931)	...	...	5,643
Population, (Registrar-General's estimate, mid-1939)			
(a) Resident population	...	...	5,788
(b) Average population appropriate to calculation of death rates	...	...	5,984
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939)	...	...	1,856
Rateable value	...	...	£24,773
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	£97

The chief industries carried on in the area are Engineering, Furniture making, Agriculture and Malting.

Unemployment has not been an important factor in the social conditions of the inhabitants, and there was very little during the second half of the year.

There are 227 more houses in the District than in the last census year 1931.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

		Total	M	F
Live Births	{ Legitimate	66	33	33
	{ Illegitimate	4	1	3
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population : 12'09				
Still Births	{ Legitimate	5	4	1
	{ Illegitimate	—	—	—
Deaths	...	83	44	39
Death Rate per 1,000 of the average resident population : 13'87				
Deaths from Puerperal causes :				
	Puerperal sepsis	...	Nil	
	Other Puerperal causes	...	1	
Death rate per 1,000 total births.				13'3

Death rate of infants under one year of age :

All infants per 1,000 live births...	...	14'28
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births		15'15
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births		Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	8
„ „ Measles (all ages)	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	Nil
„ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	...	Nil

The Birth Rate, (12'09 per 1,000 pop.), is 1'34 lower than in 1938 and 3'0 less the rate for England and Wales, (15'0). This is the lowest birth rate ever recorded for the District.

The average birth rate during the last ten years was 14'14 as compared with 22'20 over a similar period thirty years ago.

There was one death of an infant under one year of age as compared with 3 in 1938, the rate per 1,000 live births being 14'28 as compared with 38'95. In one year only, namely 1936, has a lower infantile death rate been recorded.

30 years ago the infantile death rate was more than three times as great as it has been in recent years, viz.—39'1 for the last decade as compared with 126'6 for a similar period 30 years ago.

The Death Rate, (13'87 per 1,000 pop.), is 1'48 higher than in 1938 and 1'7 more than the rate for England and Wales, (12'1)

The average death rate for the last decade was 12'71 as compared with 14'64 for the decade ending 1909.

In order to make the death rate for individual areas comparable with that for the Country as a whole, the Registrar General provides an adjusting factor for each area which allows for dissimilarly constituted populations and represents the population handicap to be applied to individual areas.

The adjusting factor for this area is 0'8 and the modified rate works out at 11'09 to compare with the National Rate of 12'1.

It is noteworthy that 52 of the 83 deaths were of persons over 70 years of age, equal to 62'6 per cent, viz.:

		Total	M	F
70-80	...	28	14	14
80-90	...	19	10	9
Over 90	...	5	2	3

This is the highest percentage of deaths over 70 ever recorded in the District.

Sec. B. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The Public Health Staff of the District Council consists of a part-time Medical Officer of Health and a Sanitary Inspector.

An emergency laboratory was opened at Gresham's School, Holt, in September for the bacteriological investigation of epidemics and the assistance of Medical Officers of Health in this respect. Since mid-November, this service has been available from Cambridge. It has not been found necessary to call upon this emergency organisation.

A scheme for the provision of immunisation against Diphtheria has been prepared and will come into effect early in the new year.

As a war-time measure, the existing accommodation at the County Isolation Hospital at Dereham has been arranged to enable the hospital to deal with an additional 36 patients, making 96 in all.

Sec. C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

(1) WATER.

Owing to the outbreak of war, no further action has been taken to increase the supply and storage accommodation at the Town's waterworks.

The average daily consumption during the Year was 94,488 gallons and the average daily pumping hours 15'74. This compares with a consumption of 59,600 gallons ten years ago.

The question of supply is not a matter for great concern providing the consumption does not rise unduly owing to war-time increases in population. Storage accommodation, however, is very inadequate even for pre-war numbers, and little time is available for settlement after softening.

The amount of water used in the Swimming Pool during the Year was 251,700 gallons.

27 service pipes were laid to supply 39 premises. The mains were extended for 157 yards in Westfield Road and from Commercial Road to the Recreation Ground, a distance of 102 yards.

As a war emergency measure, 5 cwts. of Stabilised Bleach was purchased for chlorinating purposes.

(2) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No. 3 circular filter has been re-filled with fused coke breeze 5 ft. in depth graded from the bottom 9 ins. from $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. to $2\frac{1}{2}$ ins. and the remainder from 2 ins. to 1 in. This should appreciably improve the effluent.

(3) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

3 pail closets were converted to W.C's. by informal action of the Council during the year. Since 1930, 227 pail closets have been converted to the water carriage system. Of these, 2 followed upon service of statutory notices and 206 as a result of informal action, 19 being converted voluntarily.

There still remain 295 pail closets in the central parts of the Town, 203 of this number being situated within 100 feet of the sewer mains.

30 defective water closets have been repaired by owners.

(4) PUBLIC CLEANSING.

14 privy vaults have been cleaned out by the Council during the year.

The refuse dump is now in very good order.

(5) SUMMARY OF DUTIES CARRIED OUT BY SANITARY INSPECTOR:

Houses and premises inspected	...	260
Nuisances abated	...	115
Houses disinfected	...	19

(6) SWIMMING BATH.

The Swimming Bath, which was taken over by the District Council last year, was open during the Summer months of the year.

Sec. D.

HOUSING.

Following upon representations by the District Medical Officer of Health, 8 Clearance Orders affecting 64 properties were made by the District Council, but the event of war prevented further action being taken.

Number of houses erected in the District during the year :

(a) By the Local Authority	...	4
(b) By other bodies or persons	...	27

Of the latter figure, 22 were bungalows and 5 were one-storey houses.

There has been a definite diminution in the number of houses privately erected during the past four years. Nevertheless, 207 privately owned dwelling-houses have been erected during the past 8 years.

Total number of houses erected by the District Council up to the end of 1939 :

Housing Act, 1919	...	...	10
„ 1923	...	...	4
„ 1924	...	...	50
„ 1930	...	...	54
„ 1936	...	...	14
„ 1938	...	...	12
Total			144

8 of the houses built under the 1938 Act were to relieve cases of overcrowding.

New building byelaws, based upon the Ministry's latest model byelaws, were passed by the District Council and agreed to by the Ministry in August.

HOUSING STATISTICS.

1. *Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year:—*

(i) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	26
(ii) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	20

2. *Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:—*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	76
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—*

(a)—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(i)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	4
(ii)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:				
(a)	By Owners	...	...	...	4
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners				Nil

(b)—Proceedings under Housing Act, 1938 :

(i)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	64
(ii)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	8

Sec. E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.(a) *Milk Supply :—*

Milk and Dairies Order, 1926 :—

(i)	Number of registered purveyors of milk	18
(ii)	Number of registered cow-keepers and wholesale purveyors of milk	... 26

Milk (Special Designations) Orders, 1936 & 1938 :—

Number of registered purveyors of Accredited Milk 8

Milk Samples :—

55 samples of milk were taken and forwarded to the County Council's Laboratory at Norwich. 18 were for tubercle bacilli and 37 for the methylene blue test. 2 failed the T.B test and 7 the methylene blue test.

(b) *Meat and other Foods :*

70 lbs. of canned lambs' livers and 12 lbs. of canned beef were condemned as unfit for human consumption.

Sec. F. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	2	1	Nil
Pneumonia	5	1	3
Erysipelas	1	Nil	Nil
Opthalmia Neonatorum ..	1	1	Nil

AGE GROUPS.

[illegible]

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1939.

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 — 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 — 5	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
5 — 15	1	—	2	1	—	—	1	—
15 — 25	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
25 — 35	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
35 — 45	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
45 — 55	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55 — 65	—	1	1	—	1	1	—	—
65 & upwards	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Totals	1	2	5	4	3	2	1	—

2 of the cases had not been notified before death, one respiratory and one non-respiratory.

At the end of the year there were 72 cases of Tuberculosis on the District Register, 28 respiratory and 44 non-respiratory.

GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME.

On the 4th September 1,201 persons from vulnerable areas arrived in the District. As far as was possible in the time available, the children were medically inspected by the District Medical Officer of Health on arrival. No cases of infectious diseases were found but subsequently a considerable proportion of the children were found to be either verminous or suffering from impetigo and septic sores of the skin. A smaller number were infected with scabies. Later, another problem presented itself when it was found that a surprisingly large number of the children were bed-wetters and, in some instances, worse. As a temporary measure, a few of the worst cases had to be sent

to Gressenhall Poor Law Institution. The School medical service rendered invaluable assistance in controlling the spread of contagious diseases and within a few weeks these diseases had been practically eradicated.

The deplorable personal habits of some of the children were not so quickly corrected however, and this result of parental neglect in infancy and early childhood imposed an unpleasant burden upon many householders. Great credit is due to the foster-parents for the splendid way in which the children were cared for. It is within my knowledge that in many of the homes in which the children were received, householders of very small means provided the children with necessary articles of clothing at their own expense and, in some instances, nursed them during varying periods of sickness while refusing to take advantage of sick bay facilities provided by the County Council.

By the end of the year, nearly a quarter of the children had returned home. Four months residence in the country had resulted in a general improvement in health, and the children appeared to thoroughly appreciate the joys of life in the country.

Saham Hall, near Watton, was staffed and equipped by the County Council for the reception of maternity cases occurring amongst evacuated persons, but most of the expectant mothers soon returned to their homes.

NORMAN E. D. CARTLEDGE,

Medical Officer of Health.

